burned black with the heat of the sun, as we see that old seafaring men are coloured; you would say that he was a veritable Charon, or an Iapetus, who dwell in the lower regions. In fine, to see him you would think him anything other than a Hercules. None the less, in this special picture he carries the habiliments of the said Hercules, in that he is clad in a lion's skin & has in his right hand a cudgel, & wears a quiver slung about his neck, and in his left hand a bent bow. In sum, he is a true Hercules. I thought of a surety that all these things were done by the French in derision of the Greek gods, conceiving that they fashioned him thus for revenge because of old, when he journeyed far to the West seeking the oxen and cattle of King Geryon, he made incursions & forays into their French country, laying waste many regions there. But I have not yet told what was most singularly novel and wonderful in this picture. Verily this old Hercules drew after him a marvellously great multitude of men & women, all attached to one another by the ear. The bonds were little chains of gold and amber, beautifully made, and resembled collars. And although they are all led and drawn along by these fragile chains, yet is there not one who tries to escape, though they could easily do so if they should wish. They do not hold back or turn or twist foot or head, but all follow, light of heart and joyous, wrapt in admiration of him. All, of their free will, make speed to follow him, and slackening their bonds, strive to walk faster than he, as if they would be sorry to be released. And surely it will not be amiss to tell also of that which seemed to me most unfitting. For when the painter found no place to attach the ends of these chains, seeing that in the right hand was the cudgel and in the left the bow, he pierced the tongue of the God Hercules, to which all these chains were attached, and thus made all the said men and women to be led behind him. Hercules turned his face and his eyes toward those whom he led, showing to them a gracious aspect & amiable countenance. I had stood a long time on my feet, says Lucian, beholding these things, marvelling much at them, doubting their truth, & waxing wroth, when a certain Frenchman standing near, who was not unversed in the Greek letters, since he pronounced them well & perfectly—a philosopher, I believe, of the school of philosophers commonly found in France—said to me: 'My friend, I purpose to make clear to you the riddle of this painting, for you seem to me to be greatly amazed & astounded by it. Among us we do not ascribe eloquence to Mercury, as you do in Greece, but we ascribe it to Hercules, because he is much lustier than

Mercury. You should not be astonished because he is old, for eloquence and fine speaking are wont to show forth their utmost vigour in old age, that is, if your poets speak truly, when they opine that the mind of youth is engirt by a murky obscurity, & that age, on the contrary, says downrightly what it desires to say, much better & more clearly than untaught youth; and therefore, among you Greeks the speech of Nestor is compared to flowering honey. In like manner the ambassadors of the Trojans bedeck their language with flowers, and their orations are called *Lirioessa: liria,* in Greek, if I remember aright, are flowers. And this that you see—that this gray-haired Hercules draws on with his tongue all these men held fast by the ear—has no other meaning than that language adorns; and be not amazed at this, since you cannot fail to know that the tongue has a certain connection with the ears. Nor should there be aught of censure because his tongue is pierced, for I remember that in your comedies there are iambic verses which say that men who are great talkers always have their tongues pierced. And for this cause we French are, in fine, of this opinion, that whatever Hercules does he does by force of his eloquence and fine language, like a wise man who can well convince by subjugating what he will. The arrows in the quiver are his arguments, which are keen, penetrating, and nimble, transpiercing our hearts & wills. And therefore you say that speech is *pennigera,* that is to say, feathered, like an arrow.'*

**Although sufficiently close for this purpose, Tory's rendering of the Latin is rather a paraphrase than a translation.*[7]

THUS concluded the French philosopher, whom we can plainly perceive to have been one of the Druids, of whom many an author makes pleasant mention.

WE see, then, by the words of Lucian behind the mask of this allegory, that our language is so full of grace that, if it be spoken by a discreet and wise man, of mature age, it has such great efficacy that it persuades sooner and better than the Latin or the Greek. The Latins and the Greeks admit as much when they say that this Hercules was *Gallic,* not the Latin Hercules, or Greek Hercules.

I Have seen this allegory splendidly portrayed in Rome, near the *Turris Sanguineus,* not far from the Church of Saint Louis, wherein the said Hercules and those whom he leads with his tongue by the ears are very well disposed—a little better than they are in that which is described on the first leaf of Pomponius Mela, which was printed by one named Andreas Cratandrus Basiliensis. This Andreas places in the god's